

Service Date: October 21, 1998

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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IN THE MATTER OF CUT BANK GAS)	UTILITY DIVISION
COMPANY, Application for Approval)	
of a Natural Gas Universal System Benefits)	DOCKET NO. D98.8.179
Program)	ORDER NO. 6104

FINAL ORDER

On August 7, 1998, Cut Bank Gas Company (CBG) filed before the Public Service Commission (PSC) an application requesting approval of a universal system benefits program (USBP) pertaining to natural gas utility services. CBG's USBP proposes to pay Energy Share of Montana .42 percent of CBG's gross revenues from natural gas sales to end users for the period May 2, 1997, to August 5, 1998, the cost to be recovered through a rate increase amortizing the amount through 12 months commencing with CBG's August 1998 billing. CBG proposes that its obligations for future years will be met by paying Energy Share of Montana 1.12 percent of CBG's annual gross revenues from natural gas sales to end users, the cost to be recovered through rates. CBG estimates the rate increase effective for the first 12 months of the program at \$.064 per MCF, adjustments to be made at the end of period to reflect CBG's actual gross revenues.

Section 69-3-1408, MCA, a provision within Montana's Natural Gas Utility Restructuring and Customer Choice Act, requires natural gas utilities and transmission and distribution service providers to implement a USBP, a public purpose program for conservation and low-income weatherization and bill assistance, to be funded through a universal system benefits charge (USBC) assessed to each utility customer. The Public Service Commission (PSC) has adopted USBP rules, ARM 38.5.7020 and 38.5.7021, implementing § 69-3-1408, MCA.

The PSC issued a public notice of CBG's application on August 19, 1998. No comments were received. The PSC has considered CBG's application and determines that it is in substantial compliance with § 69-3-1408, MCA, and ARM 38.5.7020 and 38.5.7021 and in the public interest and should be approved.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that CBG's application for a USBP regarding natural gas utility services is approved.

DONE AND DATED this 6th day of October, 1998, by a vote of 5-0.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

DAVE FISHER, Chair

NANCY MCCAFFREE, Vice Chair

BOB ANDERSON, Commissioner

DANNY OBERG, Commissioner

BOB ROWE, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kathlene M. Anderson
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)

NOTE: Any interested party may request the Commission to reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See 38.2.4806, ARM.